

Sen. Brown is Here to Serve You:

Constituent Services

One of Sen. Brown's most important responsibilities is to provide information and assistance to the people of Ohio. He is committed to listening to Ohioans, assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters, and providing other constituent services. Please contact any of Sen. Brown's offices if there is any way he can be of assistance to you or help someone you know.

Listening to Ohioans

Sen. Brown has held more than 200 roundtable discussions in all 88 of Ohio's counties. He also holds regular conference calls with constituent groups, hosts Thursday morning coffees with constituents in the Capitol, and responds to every letter and email he receives.

Right: Sen. Brown listens to stakeholders discuss redeveloping vacant properties.



Constituent Calls

When the U.S. Senate is in session and Sen. Brown must be in Washington, he hosts regular conference calls with small groups of Ohioans to get their input on issues before Congress. On these "Constituent Calls" in 2012, Sen. Brown listened to a diverse mix of Ohioans, from farmers to small business owners to veterans to students and more.



Constituent Coffees

Ohio constituents visiting Washington, D.C. are invited to Sen. Brown's weekly constituent coffee. Sen. Brown and his staff hold these coffees to stay in touch with Ohioans, welcome them to Washington, and get feedback on his work. For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.

Left: Sen. Brown speaks with Ohioans at a weekly Constituent Coffee

Correspondence

Sen. Brown places a high priority on prompt and accurate responses to letters, emails, and calls from constituents. In 2012, the Senator's office received and responded to more than 430,000 emails and letters from Ohioans. To send your comments to Sen. Brown, please visit his website: <http://brown.senate.gov>.

Assisting Ohioans with Federal Matters

Sen. Brown is committed to assisting Ohioans who have encountered difficulties with federal matters. Ohioans can call Sen. Brown's state offices and work directly with a constituent services representative to obtain information or resolve an issue they are having with a federal agency. Common areas of inquiry include: Social Security and Medicare benefits, veterans' benefits, military service issues, passport or visa problems, housing matters, IRS issues, and more.

*Please note: Sen. Brown's office can only provide assistance on federal matters.
When appropriate, Sen. Brown's office can help identify and locate state and local services.*

Helping Ohioans with Social Security

Social Security provides critical support to millions of Ohio seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities. It's an important program for disabled workers and surviving family members who are guaranteed monthly income through Social Security. Sen. Brown's office can often assist Ohioans having difficulty with the claims process.

For example, a Central Ohio constituent contacted Sen. Brown's office and requested assistance with getting his Social Security disability benefits released. His claim had been awarded months earlier, but he had not yet received any benefits. He contacted his local Social Security office to no avail. Sen. Brown's office submitted an inquiry to the Social Security Administration. Within two weeks, the issue was resolved and the constituent began to receive benefits.

Assisting Ohioans with Medicare

Sen. Brown has heard from many Ohio seniors struggling with rising health care and prescription drug costs. Ohio seniors shouldn't have to worry about how they're going to afford care. A Southwest Ohio constituent contacted Sen. Brown with a Medicare Secondary Payer problem. After an auto accident earlier in the year, the constituent had one doctor's office visit related to the accident. Medicare suspended payment on all medical claims due to a secondary payer issue. Sen. Brown's office contacted the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the constituent's behalf. The agency discovered the error and corrected the constituent's record.

Helping Ohio Veterans and Military Families Access Benefits

Sen. Brown, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has worked to reduce VA benefits disparities for Ohio veterans and to address the VA claims backlog. Sen. Brown's office also helps individual Ohio veterans and military families access the benefits they have earned and deserve. For example, a veteran from Appalachia contacted Sen. Brown's office regarding unpaid medical claims. After being hospitalized at a non-VA medical facility, the VA denied payment for the claims. Sen. Brown's office contacted the VA on his behalf, and after further review of the circumstances of the hospitalization, all of the medical bills were paid.

A Northeast Ohio veteran contacted Sen. Brown's office regarding his educational benefits. The veteran learned that the VA had lost his Montgomery GI Bill application for the fall semester. He resubmitted the documents but was told it would take 5-7 weeks for his payments to begin. Sen. Brown's office contacted the VA's St. Louis Education Office and the veteran's application was processed the same day. He received his payment five days later.

Obtaining Overdue or Replacement Medals for Ohio Veterans

Replacing overdue medals is a small, but significant, way to honor and repay the tremendous work Ohio's veterans have undertaken on our behalf and serves as an inspiration to future generations from our state. Sen. Brown and his staff are honored to present so many Ohio veterans and their family members with well-earned medals.

In 2012, Sen. Brown's office helped more than 400 Ohio veterans or their families obtain records and overdue or replacement medals, including helping two WWII veterans from Cuyahoga County and one Afghanistan War veteran from Jackson County obtain overdue Purple Hearts. Sen. Brown's office also obtained more than 10 new bronze stars for Ohio veterans serving in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.



In August, Sen. Brown presented overdue and replacement military medals to an Operation Iraqi Freedom Navy veteran and a World War II Navy veteran in a ceremony aboard the USS Cod. Michael Dobec was stationed for 10 months at an aid station in Al Anbar Province, Iraq and served as a member of the combat outpost trauma team providing lifesaving interventions to battle-torn Marines and coalition forces. James Burton Tedrick served in the Navy's amphibious forces and participated in the invasion of Iwo Jima.

Sen. Brown encourages any veteran who thinks he or she may be entitled to overdue or replacement medals—or has any other question or needs assistance with the VA—to contact his office. Ohio veterans and family members of deceased veterans may request military records and medals by contacting Sen. Brown's Cleveland office (216) 522-7272 or toll-free (888) 896-6446.

Protecting Ohio Consumers

Sen. Brown, chairman of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, is committed to making the financial system work for all Americans. While citizens struggle to make ends meet, consumers must have the resources to remain protected against unscrupulous and harmful banking practices.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) seeks to bring oversight and transparency to checking accounts, credit cards, mortgages, credit reporting, and private student loans. You can submit a complaint to the CFPB if you have experienced difficulties with a financial product.

For example, a constituent from Trumbull County in Northeast Ohio contacted Sen. Brown because he believed that the verbal presentation of a bank's credit card terms was misleading. The constituent filed a complaint through the CFPB against the bank, and Sen. Brown's office monitored the complaint. The CFPB sent the consumer's complaint to the bank, which refunded the consumer \$47.67 in finance charges.

Ohioans who have a banking complaint are encouraged to contact Sen. Brown's office or contact the CFPB directly by visiting www.ConsumerFinance.gov or by calling 855-411-2372.

Other Services for Constituents

Request a Flag

Sen. Brown's staff can assist organizations and individuals in purchasing flags that have been flown over the U.S. Capitol. The flag is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from the Architect of the Capitol. Please visit Sen. Brown's website for prices and information. Please be aware that due to heightened security procedures and high demand for flags, requests for flags must be submitted eight weeks prior to the desired delivery date. For prices and information on purchasing flags, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact his office.

Attend a Military Academy

Each year, Sen. Brown is honored to nominate outstanding students to attend the Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy. In 2012, Sen. Brown nominated 60 Ohio students from 36 counties to attend these service academies. Interested individuals can apply through Sen. Brown's office during the spring of their junior year of high school. Applications for the class entering in Summer 2014 will be available on Sen. Brown's website in March 2013. Questions? Contact Sen. Brown's Academy Coordinator at: (216) 522-7272 or toll-free (888) 896-6446.

Visiting D.C. – Request a Tour

If you are planning a trip to our nation's Capital, Sen. Brown's office can assist you in coordinating tours of the U.S. Capitol Building, Library of Congress, Supreme Court, and Bureau of Engraving and Printing. While every effort will be made to accommodate your tour request, due to limited availability and heightened security, please make your request at least three months in advance of your arrival. The easiest way to request a tour is to visit Sen. Brown's website.

Become an Intern

Students considering a future in public service may be interested in interning for Sen. Brown in Washington, D.C. or in one of his state offices. Internships can last several weeks or for a full semester during the school year. Preference is given to students from Ohio or attending school in Ohio, as well as students who have completed at least one semester of college. To apply for an internship, please visit Sen. Brown's website or contact one of his offices directly.

For more information, please visit Sen. Brown's website:

http://brown.senate.gov/ohio/constituent_services